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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify and assess the kinds of concerns expressed by 30 experienced physical education teachers and to compare them to Fuller's postulated developmental theory of teaching concerns. The study also sought to assess the applicability of the Teacher Concerns Questionnaire (TCQ) instrument in a physical education environment. Data were subjected to factor analysis, where it was found that, overall, the experienced teachers did follow Fuller's three stages of development: self-concerns, task concerns, and impact concerns. Further study is required on the task scale of the TCQ and the report discusses implications for follow-up experiences in an inservice environment. (Author/JD)

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THE CONCERNS OF INSERVICE PHYSICAL EDUCATION
TEACHERS AS COMPARED WITH FULLER'S
CONCERN MODEL

A Paper

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify and assess the kinds of concerns expressed by experienced physical education teachers and to compare them to Fuller's postulated developmental theory of teaching concerns. The study also sought to assess the applicability of the Teacher Concerns Questionnaire (TCQ) instrument in a physical education environment. Data were subjected to factor analysis, where it was found that, overall, the experienced teachers did follow Fuller's three stages of development. Further study is required on the task scale of the TCQ and the authors discuss implications for follow-up experiences in an inservice environment.

THE CONCERNS OF EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Considerable attention has been accorded the study of teacher concerns in recent years. Studies have produced a substantial body of knowledge identifying and describing specific experiences and concerns of both pre- and inservice classroom teachers. Key concerns of preservice teachers have included discipline and classroom management (Briscoe, 1972; Swanke, 1980), acceptance by other teachers (Ingersoll, 1976; Silvernail & Costello, 1963) and receiving favorable evaluations of their teaching (George, 1978). Inservice teacher surveys reveal that many of these concerns do not necessarily diminish with experience. Classroom management and discipline continue to be listed, as do individualizing instruction and motivating students (Ingersoll, 1976). Perceptions about their own communication behavior also has been identified as a legitimate teaching concern (Staton-Spicer, 1983).

The seminal work in the area of teacher concerns was undertaken by Francis Fuller (1969). After extensive investigation on this topic, Fuller posited a developmental theory that identified three stages of concerns teachers were believed to progress through as they grew and matured in their environment. These stages were:

Self Concerns: the teacher's own adequacy and survival as a

teacher; about class control, being observed--
and about the fear of failure;

Task Concerns: the mastery stage, dealing with the tasks
in teaching--working with too many students,
lack of instructional materials, time pressures,
etc.;

Impact Concerns: recognizing the social and emotional needs
of the pupils, individualization of instruction,
etc.

Although stage theories are often difficult to validate empirically, Fuller's generalization is consistent with findings from other studies exploring this developmental concept (Katz, 1972; Ryan, 1979; and Shelley, 1978).

To date, most research on teacher concerns has been conducted with traditional classroom teachers. Research on the concerns of physical education teachers has, by and large, been neglected; only a few studies have been undertaken on this topic (Boggess, McBride & Griffey, 1985; McBride, 1984a , 1984b) and focused only on preservice physical education teachers. Accordingly, the purpose of this study

was to: (1) identify and assess the kinds of concerns expressed by experienced physical education teachers and to compare them with those initially reported by George (1978); and (2) to assess the applicability and suitability of the Teacher Concerns Questionnaire (TCQ) with a population of experienced teachers of physical education.

METHOD

Sample

Thirty experienced physical education teachers from a school district in the Southwest comprised the sample group under study. The teachers, 16 male and 14 female, averaged 12.8 years of experience and all had served as co-operating teachers for The University of Texas at Austin in the past.

Instrumentation

The Teachers Concerns Questionnaire (TCQ) served as the data gathering instrument for the study. The TCQ is based upon Fuller's Concerns Theory and is, therefore, designed to identify and assess the concerns of pre-and inservice teachers. The instrument (see Figure 1),

Insert Figure 1 about here

designed by George (1978), is headed by the direction: "Read each statement, then ask yourself: WHEN I THINK ABOUT MY TEACHING, HOW MUCH AM I CONCERNED ABOUT THIS?" Fifteen items--five questions for each of the three concern scales follow in a random order. A five-point Lickert scale ranging from 1 = Not Concerned to 5 = Extremely Concerned accompanies each statement. Respondents circle the amount of felt concern for each of the 15 statements.

Procedure

The TCQ was distributed to the participants at a teacher inservice meeting. A brief description of the purpose of the study was given as well as instructions on how to complete the instrument. The teachers were informed that participation was voluntary. To avoid social pressure they were given the option of simply not completing the questionnaire or not returning it if they did not choose to participate. Anonymity was ensured and the only identification required was to indicate whether the participants were male or female and how many years of teaching

experience they had accrued. Upon completion, the questionnaires were collected, scored and the data analyzed.

Results and Discussion

Scale scores collected from the TCQ were tabulated and mean scores for each question calculated. Table 1 shows these scores. Mean scores were also computed for each of the three concern scales and compared with the mean scores of George's (1978) sample using two-tailed t -tests.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Results noted in Table 1, tended to follow Fuller's model. In accordance with Fuller's Concern Theory, the teachers recorded their highest scores on the impact scale. Items 8, 11 and 12 had the highest recorded mean scores (4.0). Clearly, encouraging unmotivated students represented a real challenge to this group of physical education teachers. Coupled with this concern was a desire to promote student intellectual and emotional growth. Despite the lack of motivation displayed by many students in the gymnasium, the teachers were still very much aware of and concerned with student learning.

Scores on the self scale tended to be moderate in scope. Of the five questions comprising the concern scale, item 15 received the highest mean rating (3.3). Even after years in the physical education setting, maintaining class control remained a dominant concern among the subjects. As mentioned above, this result is congruent with other studies dealing with inservice teacher concerns. Item 9--being respected by professional persons--received a surprising score of 3.0. Whether teachers of physical education feel insecure about their status as a result of teaching in an environment that is relatively isolated from the mainstream of the school would be conjecture at this stage, but may prove to be an interesting topic for future study. Finally, task concerns also tended to reflect Fuller's conceptualization. Mean item scores ranged from 2.5 on item 2 to 2.9 for item 1.

When compared to the sample of teachers studied by George (1978), no significant differences ($p < .05$) in mean scale scores for self and impact were found. A discernible difference ($p = .06$) was noted in mean scores for the task scale with the physical education teachers recording the lower scores (George = 15.67, P.E. = 13.28). Table 2 illustrates the differences

in scale scores between the two population groups.

Insert Table 2 About Here

Factor Analysis

To assess the applicability of Fuller's model and the TCQ in a physical education setting, the data were subjected to a maximum likelihood factor analysis ($N = 3$ factors) and then rotated to the varimax criterion. Table 3 contains the factor loadings of the 15 TCQ items.

Insert Table 3 About Here

The first factor consisted of five distinct loadings. Of the five, item 7, Feeling more adequate as a teacher produced the highest loading with item 15, Maintaining class control slightly less so. Other loadings consisted of items dealing with feelings of inadequacy and receiving favourable evaluations on their teaching. This factor was entitled Coping and corresponded with Fuller's Self scale.

The second factor also loaded with a consistent set of items. All five items related to concerns about student needs. Item 11, Guiding students toward intellectual and emotional growth, in particular, loaded in a strong fashion. The remaining items dealt with meeting student needs, diagnosing problems and motivating students, all of which loaded convincingly. This constellation was labelled Instructional Concerns and matched Fuller's Impact scale.

The items comprising the final factor did not load as powerfully as the previous two factors. Of the items forming this constellation, however, item 14, The routine and inflexibility of the teaching situation produced the highest overall loading. It would appear that concerns about the day-to-day duties and activities performed in the gymnasium generated a powerful response effect from this sample of teachers. Items two and five also loaded onto this factor, though neither was nearly as strong. Item five dealt with non-instructional duties while item two reflected concerns about the pressures encountered in the teachers' environment. This final factor loading corresponded with Fuller's Task scale and was named the Routine of the Gymnasium.

There were also some other interesting relationships noted among the three factors. Question one, Lack of instructional materials, although not loading in a distinct manner with any single factor, nevertheless loaded evenly across all three constellations-- .36, .39 and .39 respectively. It may be that this represents an underlying source of concern across all factors or, although designated as a 'task' question on the TCQ, this item may not be entirely appropriate and/or applicable in a physical education setting.

Although questions 9 and 13 were strongly affiliated with factor one, a slight, albeit discernable loading occurred on factor three. Again, there may be something about the routine of the gymnasium that invokes concern about professional acceptance and receiving favorable teaching evaluations. There was also a negative relationship noted between factor one (-.18) and factor three (.68) regarding item 12, concern about students getting what they require in the learning environment. One might suspect that as concern for student needs increases, concern about simply coping in the teaching situation should decrease. It was perhaps surprising that this relationship was not stronger.

In summary, then, the data do appear to support Fuller's three

factor/scale model. Three separate constellations entitled, Coping, Instructional Concerns, and the Routine of the Gymnasium were identified. Testing the null hypothesis that three factors were sufficient versus the alternative that more factors were needed confirmed this assertion:

$\chi^2_{(63, N = 30)} = 79.22, p = .08$. Of the three identified factors, one and two were seemingly stronger than three. Examination of the unweighted variance explained by each factor in Table 4 also appears to reinforce the earlier assertion that Fuller's Task scale items may not be as applicable as the Self and Impact items in a physical education setting. The uniqueness of the

Insert Table 4 About Here

physical education setting where teachers often must deal with large numbers of students in a movement-oriented environment, inadequate facilities and equipment, and tend to administrative duties other teachers might not necessarily encounter are all considerations that may account for this. It is most evident by the strong loading of item 14

that physical education teachers do have very real concerns affiliated with the daily routine of conducting their classes and performing their classroom duties.

Furthermore, the results of this study would appear to have some direct implications for inservice teacher education. First, despite years of experience, these physical educators still have concerns about their teaching. Discipline and maintaining class control, for example, do not necessarily diminish as a result of experience. Although other studies have listed these as key concerns among preservice teachers (see, e.g. Boggess et al., 1985; Cruickshank, Kennedy, & Myers, 1974; and Silvernail & Costello, 1983), inservice teachers still require updated information and strategies to deal with these concerns.

The present sample under study also expressed concerns regarding their status as professionals. This may be the result of the physical location of the gymnasium, often removed from the school mainstream. These teachers, as do other teachers, perform a vital function in the overall education of students and, like everyone else, also require appropriate positive feedback for their efforts. Administrators might reduce such feelings through more frequent visits to the physical

education facility and by maintaining closer communication with the physical education department about their programs.

Third, because these teachers have identified concerns about their student's welfare, inservice workshops could be scheduled to address specific topics of interest. For example, a training workshop could be arranged to deal with strategies for motivating students. Motivational theory, combined with practical techniques research has found to be effective, could do much to alleviate this concern. Similar workshops could be conducted to address topics associated with meeting student learning needs.

Finally, further study needs to be conducted on the task scale of the TCQ to identify items that are more appropriate to and applicable in a physical education setting. Such study is presently under way and is attempting to pursue teacher concerns about the routine tasks and duties encountered in the gymnasium setting. It is hoped items can be generated that can then be utilized in a planned adaptation of the TCQ adaptation directed to the specific concerns of physical education personnel.

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Read each statement, then ask yourself:

WHEN I THINK ABOUT MY TEACHING, HOW MUCH AM I CONCERNED ABOUT THIS

1 = Not concerned

2 = A little concerned

3 = Moderately concerned

4 = Very concerned

5 = Extremely concerned

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Lack of instructional materials..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Feeling under pressure too much of the time..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Doing well when a supervisor is present..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Meeting the needs of different kinds of students..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Too many noninstructional duties..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Diagnosing student learning problems..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Feeling adequate as a teacher..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Challenging unmotivated students..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Being accepted by professional persons..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Working with too many students each day..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Guiding students toward intellectual and emotional growth..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Whether each student is getting what he needs..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Getting a favorable evaluation of my teaching..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. The routine and inflexibility of the teaching situation..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Maintaining the appropriate degree of class control..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Please use this space for any comments
or to express additional concerns.

Figure 1. The Teacher Concerns Questionnaire

Table 1

Raw Mean Scores for TCQ Items by Scale

Scale	Item Number	Raw Mean Score
Self	3	2.4
	7	2.9
	9	3.0
	13	2.7
	15	3.3
Task	1	2.9
	2	2.5
	5	2.7
	10	2.6
	14	2.6
Impact	4	3.8
	6	3.6
	8	4.0
	11	4.0
	12	4.0

Table 2

Means and Variances of the Self, Task and Impact Scale
of the P.E. Sample and the George (1978) Sample

Scale	1 Sample	Mean	Variance	2 T-Value
Self	P.E.	14.32	26.70	
	G	15.09	16.81	0.57
Task	P.E.	13.28	13.88	
	G	15.67	19.36	2.03*
Impact	P.E.	19.28	11.64	
	G	20.59	10.89	1.10

1
 P.E. = Physical Education Teachers

*p = .06

G = George (1978)

2
 T = Two-tailed T-test between sample means

Table 3
Varimax Factor Loadings for the 15 Items on the TCQ

TCQ Item	Factor Number		
	1	2	3
1	.....	.....	.....
2	.....	.....	.46
3	.60	.....	.....
4	.....	.71	.....
5	.....	.....	.53
6	.....	.63	.....
7	.90	.....	.....
8	.....	.65	.....
9	.75	.....	.....
10	.....	.....	.....
11	.....	.90	.....
12	.....	.68	.....
13	.71	.....	.....
14	.....	.....	.99
15	.85	.....	.....

Table 4

Unweighted Variance Explained by Each Factor

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Unweighted Value	3.31	2.88	0.207